

STATINTL

Approved For Release 1999/09/16 : C

PAPER PRESENTED BEFORE THE  
FOURTH INSTITUTE ON INFORMATION STORAGE AND RETRIEVAL

STATINTL

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

3 P.M. EST

12 February 1962

THE STATUS OF TECHNICAL INFORMATION CENTERS

STATINTL

[REDACTED] 25X1A  
Vice President, Information For Industry, Inc.

Introduction:

If one may adapt a classic phrase from that great practitioner of the English language, Churchill, it can be said that: "Never in the history of human communication has so much been written by so many which is of use to so few." The question before this Institute is: "Why are these writings of use to so few?" My contribution to the discussion will concern itself with the status of technical information centers with the word "status" to be understood to mean both "prestige" and "hierarchical position". I shall attempt to avoid confusion of Utopian ideal with reality by discussing status already achieved, but I shall reserve the right to make forecasts at the end of this paper concerning certain pragmatic developments in the handling of technical information in both the short and long range. These forecasts will be made in the general context of the status of the technical information center.

In the course of this paper, a recurrent theme of "service to the user" will be evident, and the principal thrust of my argument will be that the term "status" is semantically equivalent to "service". The two generic types of technical information centers to be discussed are: 1) the internal technical information center which serves its own parent organization exclusively, and